

THE NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY BUILDING IN ASTOR PLACE.

No library association in this city has ever enjoyed a greater degree of popularity and success than the Association for the present time, the Library Association of Mechanics' Clerks, of the City of New-York. From its organization in the year 1830, when it consisted of 700 members, since 1830, it has increased to 1,000 members, and has secured a room in Astor place, through the aid of its numerous members, its success has been rapid and successful, and after a lapse of 24 years, we find it numbering 2,400 members, with a library of 41,122 volumes, at a cost of \$10,351.79, making, in magnitude, the 4th library in America, and enjoying a position that, with proper care, promises to elevate it to the rank of the first library of the United States. But, as our purpose is, not to expatiate upon the progress and prospects of the Library, but to give a brief description of its new building, we hasten to our task.

Owing to a large accession of members and extensive additions to the library, the premises of the Association in the Clinton Hall building were found to be exceedingly cramped, and altogether inadequate to the extensive requirements of the institution. And the paucity of position toward the upper portion of the City had rendered the Library, in its location, inconveniently inaccessible to the great majority of those to whom it was designed. Therefore, after repeated and earnest solicitations from the members, the Clinton Hall Association cast about them for a more central and satisfactory location, where the members might have ample opportunity to frequent its halls, and receive the instruction and the enjoyment which it contained. At this time the Astor place Opera-House, in Eighth-street, between the streets, Messrs. Coffin and Hunt purchased it on behalf of the Clinton Hall Association, for the use of the new library building, at a cost of \$140,000. After debate on the expediency of altering the building, or erecting a new one to accommodate the library, the former course was agreed to, the estimated cost of which was \$120,000 more. To Mr. James Renwick, Esq., was intrusted the task of altering the building to suit the purposes of the new owners, and soon the hammer and the saw and the sound of the mechanic's adze and revereberated through the temple erstwhile sacred to Apollo and the heavenly Muses. The present appearance of the building reflects much credit upon the artists to whom was intrusted its alteration and adaptation to its present use.

The exterior of the building has not been materially altered, saving the windows and decorations. The only embellishments are emblematic ones, looking out from groups of foliage at about the height of the second-story, while under the eaves a frieze scroll, in plaster, runs around the building, embracing at regular intervals medallion heads of Mercury and Minerva. The building is a substantial oblong structure of brick, covered with a dark brown cement, and neatly pointed at the corners.

The situation of the building is a good one. Near it is the Bible-House, the New-York University, the Astor Library, and the Cooper Institute now being erected; the Historical Society also intend to erect their library building in the immediate vicinity, so that this neighborhood would seem to be especially devoted to literature, science and those pursuits which elevate man above the circumstances of his nature.

But after a glance at the commodious stores which occupy the first floor and run through from Astor place to Eighth-street, let us enter the building. The entrance hall runs through the building, and from either end the upper apartments are reached by a broad flight of stairs, which give the approach to the Library and Reading-Rooms an imposing appearance. At the top of the stairway, on the side toward Broadway, is the Reading-Room, on the other side a long hall runs through the building opening upon both of the upper floors.

The Reading-Room is 65 feet broad and 95 feet long; it is lighted by ten large windows by day and 24 gas-burners at night. The ceiling, which is divided into richly stained panels, is supported by 20 pillars of the Corinthian order. Upon the tables of this Room are 214 periodicals, as follows:

	American.	British.	French.	German.
27 Daily Journals.....	31	2	3	1
10 Weekly Journals.....	27	1	1	1
12 Monthly Magazines.....	22	1	1	1
26 Quarterly.....	22	1	1	1
Total.....	113	5	6	4

In this room an Assistant Librarian is always in attendance to wait upon the readers. Should any work of reference be required it may be found upon the table, at the upper end of the room; and if any works from the Library should be wanted, the attendant has but to step to the signal pipe, give the order, and receive the required books in a few seconds, upon the shelves of a dumb waiter. Upon each side of the Reading-Room are entrances to a private drawing-room, designed for the use of ladies, where they may write, converse, &c.

Upon the next floor above, we shall find the Library, classrooms, and office of the Chief Librarian, Mr. Grant, and the private room of the Board of Directors.

The Library is of the same dimensions as the Reading-Room, and occupies the third and fourth stories west of the main hall. Its center is a clipeal room, surrounded by sixteen Corinthian pillars, between which the counters are ranged. This room presents a very elegant aspect; in the center is a colossal statue of Minerva, in front of the entrance is a bust of one of the patrons of the institution, and pendant from the gallery at the upper end is a portrait of the first President of the Association. The books are disposed upon shelves in the alcoves, of which there are sixteen, radiating from the pillars. A gallery runs around the second story of the room, affording access to the books upon the upper shelves. Still higher up, in space for another gallery, this will not be needed for five years at least, and probably will not be entirely occupied for some twenty years to come. Around the second story of the clipeal center is a gallery with a neat iron railing painted white and relieved with gold.

Still higher, and surmounting the caps of the pillars, is a fine entablature of elaborate stucco work, which sweeps up in a graceful concave to the central opening in the dome. From the clipeal window of the dome a light, chattered by the ground and stained glass, illuminates the center of the Library, while the alcoves have each a separate skylight. At night the Library is lighted by 132 gas-jets. The colors chosen for the pillars, counters and other parts of the room are quiet, chaste and harmonious, neither offending by their gaudiness nor depressing by the opposite extreme.

Of the books contained in this Library but a small proportion are works of fiction; the majority consists of the productions of the leading minds of all ages. When the young enter this institution for the first year it is generally found that they peruse works of fiction with unalloyed avidity; but after that period their mental palates generally become palmed with this species of literature and they gradually have recourse to works of a more lasting value and utility, and thereby lay the foundation for knowledge that in after life, when the incessant whirl of commerce shall not leave them time or opportunity for study, will be to them invaluable.

The fourth story on the west side of the hall is divided into lodge and class rooms for the use of the members, and also to let out to societies or individuals.

Retracing our steps, let us descend to the basement of the building. Here is the Lecture-Room, capable of accommodating 1,000 persons. This room is well ventilated, and provided with the most approved heating apparatus, as, indeed, are all the rooms in the building. The means of ingress and egress are most ample; in case of necessity the room might readily be emptied in one minute and a half. The ceiling of the Lecture-Room is neatly frescoed, and supported by iron pillars.

On this floor are also the furnaces for heating the building, together with various out-offices, and other necessities incidental to a building of this character.

The whole building, in all its details is excellent, and as we before observed, with good and discreet management, the Association which occupies it may collect, in the course of time, the first Library in the United States.

THE NATIONAL RACE COURSE.

The National Course, which has been established on a magnificent scale, is to be completed on Wednesday, the 14th inst. It is located on the Flushing plain, 14 miles beyond Newtown, Queens County, 14 miles from New-York. The grounds embrace the Willet Farm, 141 acres, was broken and the work commenced on Monday, the 23d inst., since which time an average of 600 men, comprising engineers, surveyors, carpenters, masons, &c., have been employed, in order to have the course completed for the opening of the spring race on Monday, the 25th inst. The course, containing 65 acres, is inclosed with a brick wall 12 feet high and 16 inches thick, coped with concrete and broken glass.

to prevent persons from climbing over or standing upon it. The wall on the Flushing road extends 2,300 feet, and is set back 100 feet from the line of the road, making a line avenue of 160 feet width.

The stand for spectators is erected on the course on the line of the Flushing road, and is 1,200 feet in length, 30 feet wide, 30 feet high; the walls are two feet thick with buttress ends, the top thickness projecting ten feet. The entire stand, 100 feet in length, is three stories high. The first story is to be occupied for refreshment rooms. The second and third stories are fitted up with seats, commanding a fine view of the course, and will accommodate about 11,000 persons. The roof has been constructed so as to accommodate about 15,000 persons. This structure has been erected with particular regard to strength, and to make it safe beyond a doubt, iron columns have been placed in the center of the building the entire length, at a distance of 12 feet from each other. Two hundred feet of the stand has been finished off in an elegant manner, with drawings, &c., attached, and is to be richly furnished, a portion of which is to be occupied by the National Jockey Club, and the remainder is to be set apart for families. This is separated from the other stands in such a manner as to command a view of the sports without interruption.

There are three entrances—one at each end of the stand for carriages, and a main entrance in the center. The Jockey stand is being erected inside of the track directly in front of the main entrance. It will be of iron, 16 feet high and 16 feet high, of the octagon form.

On the farm in the rear of the course is a large mansion-house, which will be fitted up with balconies for the accommodation of visitors, the view being equally as good as from the stand. Mr. E. Handford of Williamsburgh, is the architect, under whose supervision this work has been carried on. The entire cost of the course, including the cost of the land, will exceed \$200,000. Mr. W. W. Bayden of New-Orleans is the proprietor, associated with him are Messrs. Wm. Chesnut, F. Blakely, S. J. Carter and W. Rutledge.

Near the mansion-house will be stables, erected for the accommodation of 100 horses. This building will be arranged on a new plan, affording every comfort and facility for developing the perfect horse. It is designed to hold a national horse-fair each year, when prices in various sums, from \$2,000 down, will be offered to those exhibiting the most brave and most perfect animal.

During the present season the proprietors will erect a hotel at a cost of over \$30,000. Gaming of all kinds is to be prohibited on the grounds.

The Spring Meeting over this course will commence on Monday, the 20th of June and continue six days.

The following purses have been offered by the National Jockey Club:

First Day—Monday—Club Purse, \$1,000, two mile heats.

Second Day—Tuesday—Club Purse, \$200, mile heats.

Third Day—Wednesday—Club Purse, \$1,500, three mile heats, 20 per cent. to go to the second best horse, if more than two start.

Fourth Day—Thursday—Club Purse, \$300, mile heats, four days.

Fifth Day—Friday—Club Purse, \$500, for beaten horses, two mile heats.

Sixth Day—Saturday—Club Purse, \$2,000, four mile heats, 20 per cent. to go to the second best horse, if more than two start.

Mr. E. Handford has received information that the following named horses are now on their way to this City to be run at the spring meeting, to commence on the 25th inst.:

From Kentucky—R. P. FIELD, with "Little Plea," "Will Irishman," "Junie Barton," "Kitty Hunt," and "Ellen Barton," trained by Wm. W. Bayden.

From Virginia—Col. BELCHER, with "Red Eye," "Disappointment," "White Eye," and others.

From Canada—Mr. HARPER, with "Charley Riley," "Berry," and others.

From Tennessee—FOWLER, trainer, with "Hobland," "Companion," "Fighting," and "Little Arthur."

From Alabama—R. T. THORNTON, with "Lexington," "Arrow," and others.

Capt. MOORE, with "White Eagle," "Maid of Orleans," "Lucy," and others.

Alabama—Judge Hunter's "Blonde," Mison, trainer.

From Ohio—Mr. THOMAS WATERS, with three horses.

From New-Jersey—W. H. GREEN, with "Grand," "Thick," and "Matter." Other horses are also expected from various parts of the country.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

YOUNG MEN'S DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the members of this Committee was held last evening at Stuyvesant Institute, the President, J. Godfrey Gunther in the chair. The committee appointed at a former meeting reported a constitution and by-laws for the government of the Committee, which, on motion, were unanimously adopted. Resolutions were made by Mr. J. W. Matthews, and a motion was made and carried to hold the next meeting on the evening of the second Monday in August, for the purpose of ratifying the proceedings of the delegates to the Convention held at Syracuse the 15th of July, after which the meeting was adjourned.

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

MONDAY, AID. WATKINS, President pro tem, in the Chair.

REPORTS REFERRED.

From J. M. Reed and others, a petition for the Island Railroad Co. to be held over the deep end in the Fourth-ward, at Ninetieth-street, or several to be appointed Commissioners of Dock, a petition asking that the claim against the New-York Juvenile Asylum for the maintenance of children or 1853, amounting to \$1,282.25, be referred to a Committee.

REPORTS ADOPTED.

That the Committee transmit to the Common Council a copy of the lease to the Crystal Palace Co.

REPORTS CONSIDERED.

To disband Engine Co. No. 10, for fire prevention and fighting, the streets with Engine Co. No. 40, also, to suspend No. 46 for three months.

COMMUNICATIONS.

From B. B. Purdy, Commissioner of Repairs and Supplies. In answer to a resolution he states that the current expenses for repairing pavements from Jan. 1 to June 1, 1854, amounted to \$12,414.94, as follows: Labor \$10,670.00; materials \$1,744.94; stone \$45.00; gravel \$20.00; sand \$10.00; lime \$10.00; cement \$10.00; and other materials \$10.00.

The contract for work for repairing Grand and Fulton-sts. amounted to \$21,750. Russ & Co. paid \$20,000; pavement on Broadway, was for 1853, contracted at \$30, and paid \$20,000; and for 1854, contracted at \$30, and paid \$20,000.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

From His Honor the Mayor relative to landing station for United States Government troops. To Committee on Wharves, &c.

From the Controller, in reply to a resolution in relation to payment of bills. Laid on the table to be printed.

From the Commissioner of Streets and Lamps, in answer to resolution as to what contracts have been entered into for cleaning streets. To Committee on Cleaning Streets.

From the Board of Police, in answer to a resolution as to flagging sidewalk in front of Nos. 103, 105, 107 and 109 Mercer-st., for fencing London Thirty-sixth, Thirty-seventh, Thirty-eighth and Thirty-ninth-sts., asking that they be ordered to do so. To Committee on Streets.

From City Inspector, with locations of low and sunken lands, relative to which complaints have been made as to stagnant water, with reports of Health Wardens thereon. To Committee on Public Health.

From the Board of Board, respecting annulling contract for sewer in Forty-ninth-st., from East River to Second-ave. To Committee on Sewers.

From the Clerk of Supervisors, with copy of report and resolutions, in relation to the County Jail. To Committee on Repairs and Supplies.

Appointments of assessors for sewer in Forty-ninth-st., from Greenwich-st. to North River, in Christy-st., and through Seventh-ave. to Fifty-first-st. To Committee on Assessments.

REPORTS.

On Committee on Sewers, to consent to grant permission to Edgar S. Van Winkle and others, to build a sewer at the corner of Third and West-sts., asking that the petition of M. Rodin for pay for injury from sewer be referred to Finance Committee. Both adopted.

On Finance Committee, adverse to petition of Congressmen, Aschle Chesed, to be relieved from assessment. Adopted.

On Committee on Fire Department, to confer with Board of Aldermen on communication of the Chief Engineer, of the Board of Fire, coming up with the amendment of the Board of Aldermen, Mr. WATKINS moved that the Board affirm their former action and reject the Aldermanic amendment.

Mr. KENNY—This is now the twelfth day of June, and the Fourth of July is to be celebrated at all, we had better consult with the Board of Aldermen.

Mr. WATKINS was opposed to a small party celebration. He had learned that the sum of \$10,000 would not be enough to make a display equal to that of last year. He knew that some of the transparencies wanted repairing to the extent of several hundred dollars, and it became the City Council to do the handsome thing.

Mr. NORTON believed that \$5,000 was quite enough to do the thing of July 4th.

Another Conclunian, whose name we did not get, asked indignantly if the Board of Conclunians were going to be outdone by every little Yankee boy who would spend his last cent for fire-crackers to celebrate that glorious day.

Mr. HENKINSON—I think \$5,000 by no means too much for the celebration of the Fourth of July, but as we cannot get any more than \$5,000, why half a loaf is better than no loaf.

The question of adhering to the former action of the Board was taken—20 for, and 31 against. Lost.

The question of concurrence resulted—35 for, 15 against. Carried.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS—MONDAY.

A communication was received from the Judges stating that they had been notified by a resolution of the Board of Aldermen, that they could not hold their trial terms during this month in the Chambers of the Board of Aldermen and late Board of Assistants, and asking that Court-rooms be provided for them. Referred.

A resolution was presented to pay the extra Clerk employed from April to August the same amount as the regular Clerk. Referred.

A report in favor of paying Wm. E. Schell's bill of \$800 for stationary is received. Adopted.

A small bill for advertising was ordered to be paid, and one referred.

Adjourned to first Monday in July.

TREATY WITH JAPAN.

Correspondence of The Commercial Advertiser.

HONG KONG, Saturday, April 8, 1854.

The United States steam frigate "Saxo," Captain Buchanan, arrived here on the 4th inst., which port she left on the 25th inst., bringing news that the conditions of a treaty between the Americans and Japanese had been agreed upon and would be ratified on the 25th inst.

The precise nature of the treaty is not yet known. It is known in the squadron, but it is beyond doubt that free intercourse between the two countries is fully opened, and that two ports, with a coal depot and a supply of coals for the United States steamers would be conceded to the Japanese.

I am further informed that by the above treaty, kind treatment and an abundant supply of water and provisions are secured to all Americans who may visit any part of the Japanese coast.

Three vessels consigned are Simoni in Nippon, near Cape Yezo, and Hokkaido, on the island, and on the Straits of Marzumi; but it is agreed that should the report of the naval officers, sent to survey these places, be unfavorable, the vessels will be sent to the same island will be selected in their stead.

On the 27th inst., after the treaty had been signed, Commodore Perry was to give an entertainment to the four Imperial Commissioners.

The telegraph and electric telegraph taken by the squadron to Japan were in successful operation when the "Saxo" quitted port.

The Japanese, utterly denied having made any treaty with, or concessions to, the Russian Government.

Immediately after the treaty was signed, Capt. Adams will leave for America in California, in the "Saxo," with dispatches for the American Government.

For many months we have known nothing of the movements of the northern army of the insurgents. After the capture of the city of Yeddo, the army went into winter quarters, and no action of any importance have since taken place. Trooping-way maintains his position, and when certain reinforcements reach him, he probably march for the capital.

There great distress prevails, and the poverty of the treasury leads to increased oppression.

The issue of paper money and the debasing of the copper currency have been a source of complaint.

It is necessary to say that the legislative body will accept the report and authorize their master to leave the country.

A recent published report on the loan just mentioned, but in the following statements:

The number of subscribers was over 99,000, and the whole amount of subscriptions was over 400,000,000, nearly double the amount of the loan; 60,000 of the subscribers subscribed for amounts under 1,000 francs.

This may truly be called a popular loan. It presents the financial condition of France in brilliant contrast with that of her transparent neighbor, England, who to raise less than a tenth of the same amount only by a forced loan.

I think none of my letters not long ago contained an instance of such intolerance exercised in Sweden, by Swedish law, against certain individuals whose crime was the changing of their religious opinions from Protestant to Catholic. The Catholic newspapers here very properly cried out against it, and with logical consistency, the Protestant and political press, joined in the protest.

The Jews are politically accused. I add a specimen of French governmental religious persecution, which is persistently carried on against all Protestants in the districts where they are few in number—but especially against such as do not belong to one of the two officially recognized sects of Protestants. I translate from the *Archives de Christianite*, a Protestant journal published here.

The following ordinance, dated April 3, 1854, was adopted by the Chamber of the Viceroy by the sub-Prefect of Saule. There exists in your commune a sect called Baptists, which is not recognized by the State. The influence of this so-called religion has not therefore the right to give any public place.

In case of the death of a citizen, and the refusal of the Cure to officiate, it belongs to you to proceed to the burial, which you will attend in person.

This treatment of dissenters does not require any comment. It is an isolated instance of its kind. It is pity that some allied powers or other could not force Napoleon and the French into the ways of tolerance, as he is forcing his cousin Abdul Medjid into ways of intolerance. I say cousin on the authority of Louis Enault, who brings the following story home with him from a journey to Constantinople. The authority is poor; the story is true.

The Sultan, Abdul Medjid, thirty-sixth Sultan of the dynasty of the Ottomans, &c., &c., is related on the mother's side to the Emperor of the French. His grandmother was a niece of Marie Antoinette, Madame de Lamoignon, Duke de Rivery by name, a relative of Josephine de la Pagerie, Napoleon's maternal grandmother. This young lady came to France with her husband, a ship bound for Martinique. The ship sprang a leak one day, and Madame de Rivery was taken off by a vessel going to Majorca. This vessel was attacked by an Algerine Corsair, who took possession of crew and passengers. Mlle. de Rivery was sold to the Duke of Algiers, who sent her as a present to the Sultan, Abdul Hamed. The late Sultan Mahmood, father of the present Sultan, sold her to the Sultan of Egypt.

Just before the late Sultan's death, as well as literary life, he had been told that Enault, who is a very useful story still. The chief personage in the story is a poor, the story is true.

THE CURAN QUESTION—THE BUDGET—RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

From Our Own Correspondent.

PARIS, Monday, May 24, 1854.

The matter of chief interest to America is here, and which also largely occupies the attention of Frenchmen, and that of their master, the Emperor, is the Curan aspect of our relations with Cuba. It is said that Louis Napoleon, with less than his usual caution, has expressed his sympathy with Spain. It is perfectly well known that his wife has expressed her directly and positively, and that they are as warm and earnest as become a woman and a Spaniard. She has not hesitated to say that she would rather be a Spaniard than what she considers to be an extravagant and insulting claim, to the last drop of Spanish blood. What her influence may be over the rulers of Spain let each one judge. But let no one too suddenly judge that it can have no weight at the Spanish Court, where influence mingles so largely in statecraft. It is conceivable that she may exert it through her mother, her husband, or her father-in-law, or through her husband at Paris. Her patriotic motives to her exertion has an active auxiliary in her personal hatred of Mr. Soule, whom she would delight to baffle, not more in his quality of American negotiator and Cuban filibuster, than in his quality of personal enemy to her and her house. No one has forgotten, and she least of all, the Soule duel, nor the manner—which she must consider foully abusive—in which the Soules have spoken and written of